Broadcast Your Safety: City of Chicago Promotes Self-Certification Program

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We've all seen restaurant windows glittered with Zagat, Grubhub, and other stickers signaling that delicious cuisine awaits inside. As businesses re-open across Chicago, the City is offering another decal to signal safety: the Be Safe. Chicago: Business Self-Certification badge.

This program allows businesses, such as restaurants, bars, nail salons, and other companies, to broadcast that they are taking meaningful steps toward reducing the transmission of COVID-19. After reviewing industry guidelines and developing a re-opening plan, businesses participate in a survey self-certifying that definitive and important safety measures are in place. If the business qualifies for self-certification, it will receive a badge to post in a prominent location. The City is also encouraging self-certifiers to post on social media under #BeSafeChicago.

The survey asks the following (paraphrased) safety-related questions:

- Have you reviewed appropriate industry guidelines?
- Have you restructured to accommodate for social distancing?
- Have you closed non-essential common areas and limited gatherings to no more
than 10 people at a time?

- Do you require employees and customers to wear face coverings and PPE, according to industry guidelines?
- Have you ensured the availability of hand sanitizer?
- Have you suspended the use of shared items, where possible?
- Have you conducted employee safety training, such as for handwashing?
- Are you committed to ensuring employees stay home if they run a temperature at or above 100 degrees or experience COVID-19 symptoms?
- Do you provide visual guidance for social distancing and entry requirements?
- Do you encourage employees to work remotely, when possible?
- Have you structured operations to reduce employee overlap, where possible?
- Are you committed to reporting and tracing protocols, per industry guidelines?
- How do you plan to go above and beyond the guidelines? (The City is looking for "creative and innovative" approaches.)

The survey also requires the self-certifier to include a detailed description of the company's plan to re-open.

Self-certifying may impact consumer behavior. It also appears to be a meaningful way to communicate a company's health and safety efforts to employees, customers, and the community generally.

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